

# SILICA SAFETY

Unmasking a deadly threat to Australian construction industry workers and DIY home renovators.





# WHAT IS SILICA DUST & WHERE IS IT FOUND?

Crystalline Silica is a natural substance found in many common materials such as rock, stone, bricks, mortar, tiles and some plastic composites. Silica Dust is created when we cut, drill, sand, crush, or otherwise breakdown any material that contains Crystalline Silica, particularly concrete. Silica Dust particles are incredibly fine. Because they are so small, the particles can be easily breathed deep into our lungs.

From pins and needles in your hands (scleroderma), inflammation of the air-ways (chronic bronchitis), or the destruction of lung tissue (emphysema); to scarring of the lung (silicosis), Kidney Disease and Lung Cancer - the risks and consequences of Silica Dust exposure can be severe.



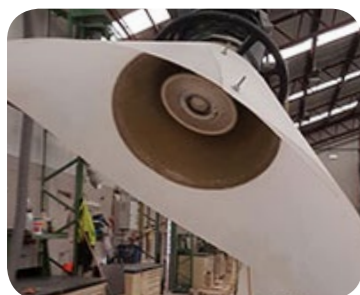
As a leading demolition contractor, we know Silica Dust can be found in a variety of areas on a construction site - some obvious, others less so:

- |                                            |                                             |                                            |                         |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1<br>Dust from concrete/masonry cutting    | 2<br>Dust from strip out                    | 3<br>Dust from drop zone/dump chute        | 4<br>Dust from load out |
| 5<br>Dust on floors when cleaning/sweeping | 6<br>Dust embedded in machinery cabin seats | 7<br>Dust embedded in machinery floor mats | 8<br>Dust from clothes  |

# HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF & MY WORK MATES?

## 1. USE VENTILATION

Use local exhaust ventilation systems to remove dust. Ensure ventilation is correctly placed and operates at effective flow rates.



## 2. CAPTURE DUST

Use tools with dust capture to prevent dust escaping into the air.



## 3. CUT WITH WATER

Cut stone or concrete with water, also known as wet cutting. Water helps prevent dust from escaping into the air.



## 4. WEAR A MASK

Wear the right mask to prevent breathing in silica. For specifications on the right mask for you, refer: AS/NZS 1715:2009



## 5. USE A VACUUM

Use a class M or H vacuum cleaner to remove dry dust, or wet sweep with a broom. Never use compressed air. Refer: AS/NZS 60335.2.69:2017

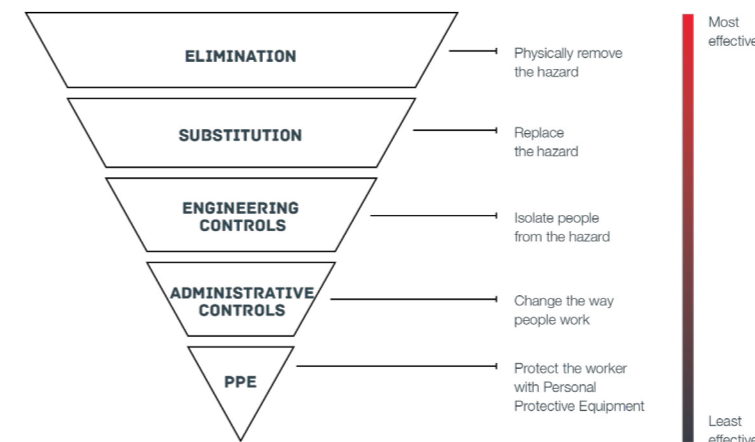


**ALWAYS FOLLOW THE ADVICE OF SAFETY DATA SHEETS & PRODUCT LABELS!**

# CONTROL MEASURES

Delta Group is one of the largest demolition, recycling, civil and environmental contractors in the world today. Our triple certified management systems have been proven on thousands of projects in high risk environments, Australia wide.

Regardless of whether you're a large commercial contractor like us, a self employed construction professional, or an experienced DIY home renovator - Silica Dust Control Measures must be a priority before any works start. A simple but effective rule is to follow the **Hierarchy of Control Principles**:



No matter what your qualifications or level of experience, everyone has the capacity and capability to step through these principles and eliminate the risk of Silica Dust exposure. It's not just your health and well being in danger, but the health and well being of everyone around you as you work.

# HEALTH MONITORING

Employers must arrange health monitoring for workers where there is a significant risk to their health from exposure to crystalline silica. Insurance & Care NSW (icare) offers subsidised health monitoring to businesses across NSW through its Lung Screen Service.

The Safework NSW Health Monitoring Webinar will help you understand when it is required and what your regulatory obligations are. Eligible (small) businesses who complete the webinar can apply for a \$500 rebate.

Dr Karl explains how to stay safe when you work with manufactured stone, concrete, bricks or rock.



Watch this Safety Alert from Safework NSW and learn how to work safely with Silica.





# EVERY BREATH MATTERS

For more information on Silica Dust exposure  
and how you can eliminate risk in your  
workplace or home, contact:

Safework NSW

13 10 50

[safework.nsw.gov.au/silica](https://safework.nsw.gov.au/silica)



NSW

SafeWork NSW

Delta Group has published this case study to promote awareness of Silica Dust risks having entered into an Enforceable Undertaking with Safework NSW as a result of an alleged contravention of sections 19 (32) of the WHS Act.

 DELTA GROUP